

845/99 cont./

asked to utter and write spells to hasten the womb. After the infant is born the cord is cut with a pair of scissors and the placenta is buried in the ground in the house or outside.

After childbirth a Miao woman drinks several bowls of cold water for the purpose of purifying her blood. Within three days

she goes out to the fields to work. There are cases in which a woman gives birth in the forenoon and goes out to work in the afternoon. It is said that the Miao woman is able to do this by eating a secret herb. For postnatal nourishment the poor eat eggs and the rich eat chicken.

Recently, the Miao have adopted the Chinese custom of inviting friends and relatives to a feast and naming ceremony on the third day after a child's birth. A name is sometimes adopted according to the time of birth. For instance, if a child is born in a certain month, it would be named after the month. The chief of the Miao at the time of the rebellion during the reign of Emperor Ch'ien Lung was called Wu pa-yüeh /Wu, Eighth Month/. Sometimes the name of the season when the birth occurred is adopted. In another case, the weight of the infant may be used as the name, for instance, an infant weighing so many chin at birth will be named for that weight. In still other cases, the name of an animal, a pig, goat, sheep, dog, or cow is used in the belief that the child will be easy to raise.

There is no definite time for feeding the baby. Generally when the baby cries it is fed. If the mother has no milk, the baby is then fed with sugar and rice. At the time of teething, if the first tooth emerges in the upper jaw, it is a sign of ill omen, portending the death of one of the parents or paternal grandparents, because the Miao believe that such a tooth is a grave-digging hoe.

/100/ A pregnant unmarried girl often produces an abortion by swallowing mercury. Illegitimate infants are often drowned.

Properly married couples rarely practice abortion or infanticide.

585 they really want her but it is also true that brides sometimes run away at this time. Another ceremony that is sometimes performed at a wedding is that of calling the soul of the bride. Her soul may fail to come with her and if it does not come, she will die.

After a few months have passed, the bride is permitted occasionally to visit her parents, but henceforth her husband's home is her home and his family is her family. She calls her husband's parents father and mother.

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844 When an unmarried woman gives birth to a child, the child is made away with as secretly as possible and little is said about it. When a married woman becomes pregnant, about three or four months before the child is born a *tuan kung* 塢公 is called. He takes a bowl, fills it with water, and burns a paper charm in it. He then covers it first with a piece of paper, then with a blue cloth. He twists his hands in odd ways above the bowl of water. He calls his gods to come and protect the bowl of water and the woman. The water is supposed to be from a sea in heaven and to protect the woman from demons. The gods he has called live in the bowl of water as in a sanctuary, and they protect the pregnant woman. Therefore the bowl of water is hung up from a beam of the roof inside the house. On the first and fifteenth of each moon the head of the house pours water into the bowl to replace the water that has evaporated and burns paper money as a means of presenting money to the gods.

The *tuan kung* is paid before this ceremony and after the birth of the child if the child lives. He may be paid a dollar or two or be given clothing, pork, a chicken or some other object.

After the birth of the child the *tuan kung* is invited back to take down the bowl of water. He arranges tables, burns incense and lights candles, and burns paper or spirit money as an offering to the gods. Then he takes down the bowl of water. He repeats incantations, then pours the water out in the main hall near the end farthest from the door. He is again paid money or given presents if the child and the mother live, but not otherwise.

846 The mother is impure after the child is born and cannot leave the house for one month. On the third day a chicken is killed for her. The salt she eats must be burnt red in a fire before she can eat it, else she may become ill. On the seventh day the mother washes all her clothes. Then she can move about freely in the house, but she must not eat with anybody else, and she must be given good food to eat—eggs, vermicelli, cabbage and so on. But she must not eat fat meat and a few other things that are supposed to injure her. She must not eat the flesh of an animal that has been killed within the past month or two.

000 from their necklaces. They like dancing, songs and music. Their
 533 instruments are the flageolet and flute with organ pipes or sen. The
 534 latter is composed of a stout tube ending in a metal mouthpiece, in
 535 the middle of which are inserted six organ pipes of varying length,
 pierced with holes at their base. To play this instrument one blows
 into the mouthpiece while holding the large tube in both hands at
 arm's length, at the same time closing certain of the holes on the
 organ pipes with the fingers. Thus nasal sounds resembling those of a
 bad accordion are obtained. This music is always accompanied by
 a somewhat grotesque dance in which the musician himself engages.
 Holding the instrument at arm's length in a very inconvenient way,
 he leans his body forward from the hips and, skimming over the
 ground with his feet, he starts hopping from one foot to the other,
 while turning about to the right or to the left. This heavy and grace-
 less exercise reminds one of the dance of a bear at a fair. The Meo
 also play a small jew's-harp which is made up of a thin strip of brass
 which vibrates against the teeth. Women neither dance nor play
 musical instruments, but love to sing in shrill voices like a small
 girl, while working in the fields.

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We shall see farther on that all the ceremonies are accompanie
 by feasts lasting several days. In addition in the high region the
 Meo /142/ have the reputation of being the mountaineers most in-
 clined to drunkenness. Happily for the future of their race, the
 altitude at which they live and the arduous work to which they devote
 themselves are elements which combat the dangers of alcoholism.

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Customs relative to childbirth are not remarkable. No sign
 marks the house of a woman in confinement. A woman in labor seats
 herself on a tabouret to give birth to her infant, assisted by her mother
 or midwife. If the new-born child is a boy, the placenta is buried in
 front of the main doorway, and if it is a girl, under the kitchen hearth.
 As among the Tho, bastards are given a very poor reception. If an
 attempt to bring about an abortion has not been successful, the mother
 is forced to leave her infant to die of hunger.

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Marriage preliminaries are shorter and less complicated than
 among the Tho. When a young man desires to wed a young woman,
 he tells his father about it, and he sends two of his men friends,
 selected from among older and respectable persons, carrying sticks
 of incense, in order to make the proposal. The sweet-smelling sticks
 are stuck into the soil and lighted in front of the doorway of the young
 woman's parents. If the master of the house offers a drink of alcohol

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836 With regard to the boys, however, the parents are
[562] positively proud of the successes of their sons in this respect. The chief, Tsin Tsai, for instance, told me that his second youngest son was especially clever with the girls. He had surely inherited this from him, because in his youth he had been called a "tiger among the girls"!

848 It is strange that illegitimate children are relatively
[842] rare, although I was repeatedly told that no contraceptive devices are used. If a girl gives birth to an illegitimate child, however, the families concerned immediately change their attitude, /93/ and the parents of the lovers forcefully insist on the marriage of the young people. The girl is ready for this under all circumstances, but it sometimes happens that a young man wants to evade his obligation. In this case both families
[626] put such pressure upon him that he practically always gives in. If not, he is obliged to pay any indemnity that the girl's
[684] parents demand. If he is not in a position to do this, he has to marry for otherwise he would be severely punished by the chief of the village.

627 If a young man should deny paternity, the testimony of
848 the girl, or the young mother, is valid in doubtful cases. She summons her parents and those of the young man and leads them to the place where she had her meetings with the young man. She describes details which almost always force the young man to withdraw his denials. Moreover, in the generally small communities, it is probably always known "with whom a girl is going," as my informants said. On the other hand, if the seducer pays the price asked by the girl's parents, the matter
[951] is regarded as settled, and the illegitimate child remains with the family of the mother and belongs to this family.

114 In contrast to my observations, separate authors report
847 that the Meau try to get rid of illegitimate children through
848 abortion or at the latest after the birth. Lajonquière (1).

1. II. p. 317.

for instance, writes: "If a child is conceived out of wedlock,

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Miao AES

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114 an attempt is made, with the help of medicines, to bring about
847 an abortion. If this is unsuccessful, the child is abandoned
848 after birth and dies of hunger. " These statements, which
Abadie (2) repeats verbatim, do not agree, as has been said,

2. Page 165.

with my findings.

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827 Among the Meau the average age of marriage for the
582 young men is between sixteen and seventeen, that of the girls
about four years later.

[163] In explanation of this age difference, I was told that it is
only after this age that a girl's body is strong enough to bear
without harm the minimum of ten children expected of a
woman. Earlier births are said to weaken the organism, and the
women turn into invalids and are no longer able to do the
proper amount of work. The /94/ young men, on the other
hand, are able to beget strong children at a much earlier age.

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595 As a consequence of this attitude the first wife of a Meau
[152] is generally older, more mature, and stronger than her husband.
[554] The younger, later wives can therefore be all the more easily
absorbed into the household, especially since jealousy plays no
role at all. The first wife is the chief wife, to whom all the
other wives are subordinate in every respect. Accordingly,
she has a position of trust within the community.

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864 Among the Akha the father sleeps with the unmarried
[513] sons, the mother with the unmarried girls, each in one room
[833] of the dwelling. During the night the father visits the mother,
or vice versa, "when everybody is asleep," as my informant
put it. Thus, even in the parents' house there is no barrier to
prevent the children from observing sexual activities from the
earliest age. Like the Meau, the Akha, too, are well acquainted
[842] with the physiological aspect of paternity. Nevertheless
A sexual freedom for unmarried persons prevails among them
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MiaoAE5

/248 cont. /

c) Criminal Law

673 Regarded as crimes among the Meau are: theft, robbery, manslaughter, lying, bodily injury, and offense by assault, whereas verbal offenses are not ordinarily punished. Furthermore, kidnapping, especially of children, is regarded as a crime. In former times, treason was added to the list of possible crimes which were punished.

684 Incest, on the other hand, is punished exclusively by the
[769] ancestors; the people do not interfere. If it becomes known,
[622] however, it is regarded as the utmost disgrace.

At first it seems surprising that rape generally remains unpunished. Since, however, in the life of the Meau a girl can hardly be taken unawares without some co-operation on her part -- there are always female companions or family members nearby when a girl leaves a village -- it is assumed that a girl who goes off alone with a boy is prepared for every eventuality. If a case of rape should occur, however, the girl's father demands two or three pieces of silver from the culprit, who will pay without opposition. The case is different if the girl becomes pregnant. Then no distinction is made between rape and voluntary surrender. Even then, however, as was set forth in detail in the chapter, "Life in the Community," the section, "Courtship and Betrothal," no pressure is exerted for marriage. /111s. 46-51 appear here on unnumbered pages/ /249/ although the girl's parents in particular will make every attempt to bring about the marriage.

• [848] If a girl who is pregnant as a consequence of the wrong done to her should give birth to a stillborn child, the culprit must pay the same price for the stillborn child as is charged for children who must be turned over to a creditor in lieu of payment, namely, 70 pieces of silver for a boy, and 50 pieces for a girl.